

Salt and Serenity

New Classic Coconut Macaroons

This recipe comes from Alice Medrich's book, "Chewy Goopy, Crispy, Crunchy."

Makes about 18 cookies.

4 large egg whites

3 1/2 cups (5.25 ounces) unsweetened dried flaked (not shredded) coconut, also called coconut chips

OR 3 cups (9 ounces) sweetened dried shredded coconut

3/4 cup (5.25 ounces) sugar

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Slightly rounded 1/4 teaspoon salt

1. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Set aside.
2. Combine all of the ingredients in a large heatproof mixing bowl, preferably stainless steel because the mixture will heat faster than in glass. Set the bowl directly in a wide skillet of barely simmering water and stir the mixture with a silicone spatula, scraping the bottom to prevent burning, until the mixture is very hot to the touch and the egg whites have thickened slightly and turned from translucent to opaque, 5 to 7 minutes. Set the batter aside for 30 minutes to let the coconut absorb more of the goop.
3. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Position racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven.
4. Using 2 tablespoons of batter, make attractive heaps 2 inches apart on the lined cookie sheets. Bake for about 5 minutes, just until the coconut tips begin to color, rotating the pans from top to bottom and from front to back halfway through the baking time to ensure even baking.
5. Lower the temperature to 325°F and bake for 10 to 15 minutes, until the cookies are a beautiful cream and gold with deeper brown edges, and again rotating the pans from top to bottom and from front to back halfway through the baking time. If the coconut tips are browning too fast, you can lower the heat to 300°F.
6. Set the pans or just the liners on racks to cool. If you plan to add chocolate, press a small piece of your favourite chocolate into the cookies while they are still hot.
7. Let cool completely before gently peeling the parchment away from each cookie. The cookies are best on the day they are baked—the exterior is crisp and chewy and the interior soft and moist. Although the crispy edges will soften, the cookies remain delicious stored in an airtight container for 4 to 5 days.